

The American Observer Salutes

150th Birthday of Our Nation's Capital



WASHINGTON AS SEEN FROM THE AIR. The following places of interest are indicated by numbers: 1. Library of Congress; 2. Supreme Court; 3. House Office Buildings; 4. The Capitol; 5. Senate Office Building; 6. Pennsylvania Avenue; 7. National Gallery of Art; 8. Smithsonian Institution; 9. Federal Triangle; 10. Jefferson Memorial; 11. Washington Monument; 12. The White House; 13. Reflecting Pool; 14. Potomac River; 15. Lincoln Memorial; 16. State Department Building; 17. Lee Mansion and Arlington Cemetery. This view shows the spacious way the city is laid out, and how government buildings dominate the scene.

FAIRCHILD AERIAL SURVEYS, INC.

Washington's History and the City Today

A Once-Ridiculed "Wilderness" Is Now a Beautiful and Influential Metropolis

WASHINGTON, D. C., next month, begins the celebration of its 150th anniversary as the seat of government for the United States.

A *Salute to Freedom* pageant, to take place on April 15, is the first event of the Sesquicentennial observance. The impressive pageant will be held on the beautiful and expansive grounds of the national Capitol building. Thousands of students in a mass chorus will sing patriotic songs to the music of the combined Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps bands. Top leaders of the federal and of state governments are to attend.

The pageant inaugurates a series of programs to last until November 22. Each of the 48 states is to be honored on a special day, starting with Maryland on April 28. There is to be an *I Am an American Day* on May 21. President Truman is expected to lead a mammoth parade through the capital on *Flag Day*, June 14. Floats in the parade are to dramatize great events in Washington history. At least one special event is being planned for each day of the celebration.

Freedom is the theme for the entire program which, incidentally, may be extended into next year. Plans are under way to have a great exhibition, called the *Freedom Fair*, in the capital sometime during 1951.

Since Washington is our nation's seat of government, and since it has become a key capital of the world, THE AMERICAN OBSERVER, and its associated publication, the Weekly News Review, have joined efforts to put out a special issue on the city. Both papers are carrying the same word-and-picture story of Washington, and both will restore their usual features next week.

In the nation's early days, Virginia and Maryland ceded a tract of land along the Potomac River to the federal

government. This territory came to be known as the District of Columbia. What it amounted to was a tiny state, and within this state was to be built the nation's capital city, Washington. At the time, it was probably thought that the city of Washington would never occupy all of the District of Columbia; in fact, the government later turned back to Virginia the territory it had originally obtained from that state.

Today, Washington has developed and spread out to such an extent that it not only occupies the entire 69 square miles in the District of Columbia, but its suburbs extend for miles into the surrounding areas of Virginia and Maryland. Officially, the capital city contains only about 800,000 people; but actually the population of metropolitan Washington, including those people who live in adjoining Maryland and Virginia areas, is approximately 1,400,000.

Like many good-sized communities, Washington has extensive slums, but most of the city has exceptional beauty and spaciousness. It probably has more area devoted to parks than has any other large city in the country. One of these, Rock Creek Park, extends for miles through the District. The park has great natural beauty, with its heavy woods and picturesque creek which runs almost its full length. It provides a haven for many thousands of Washingtonians during the hot summer months, for it is one of the coolest areas of the city.

In addition to the extensive parks and well-landscaped grounds, the broad avenues in the capital city help to accent the feeling of space. So, too, does the lack of skyscrapers. By law, no structures within the District may be built higher than the 555-foot, needle-like Washington Monument. Few of them even approach its height. Thus, the visitor to Washington sees a city of long, low buildings made of marble, brick and concrete. Many of the structures house the various departments and agencies of our national government.

Washington's main importance, of course, lies in the fact that it is the seat of our national government. As is well known, all federal officials and

employees do not live or work in Washington. In fact, of the 1,800,000 civilians who are employed in the United States by the federal government, only 212,000 are in Washington. The rest are scattered over the country, working in towns and cities as postal employees, as agents of the Department of Agriculture, as employees of the Veterans Administration, and in other types of jobs.

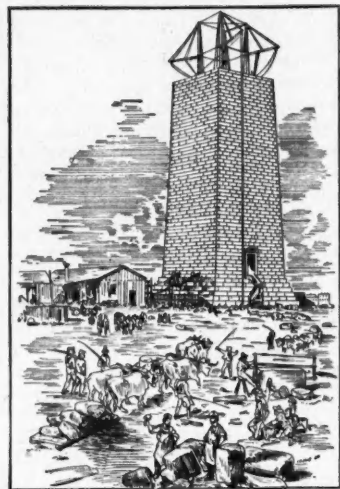
However, the government workers in Washington, together with their families, make up a large portion of the city's total population. Most private businesses in the city depend for their livelihood on the sale of goods and services to government employees and their families.

Consequently, government is the capital city's chief industry. It is to Washington what automobile manufacturing is to Detroit and what the steel works are to Pittsburgh.

While most federal employees do not live in Washington, practically all activity carried on by the national government is directed from the capital. All the regular departments of government, such as Treasury, State, Commerce, Labor, Justice, have their principal offices in Washington. The Department of Defense is housed in the giant Pentagon Building, which lies just across the Potomac in Virginia. In addition to these departments, there are a large number of smaller federal agencies located in the capital city. And, of course, it is the home of Congress, the President, and the Supreme Court.

In addition to being the seat of our federal government, Washington is also the national headquarters for many private organizations. These include such groups as the Red Cross, Daughters of the American Revolution, Chamber of Commerce, American Federation of Labor, the Congress of Industrial Organizations, and the National Education Association, to mention only a few.

The city derives its international flavor from the fact that most countries of the world have either legations or embassies in Washington. The heads of these establishments, ministers and ambassadors, handle all the diplomatic business carried on be-



BEGUN IN 1848, work on the Washington Monument was halted in 1854 when funds were exhausted and bitter quarrels about the structure broke out. About one third of the monument had then been completed. Building was resumed in 1880 and finished four years later.

tween their governments and the United States. Their negotiations are conducted largely through our State Department.

Metropolitan Washington would be interesting enough to the tourist if it had no more to offer than the features we have mentioned. In addition, however, it abounds with important historic shrines and monuments. Mount Vernon, Lee Mansion, Arlington Cemetery, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Washington Monument, and the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials are some of the main tourist attractions. The Smithsonian Institution has famous scientific and historic collections. The National Gallery of Art has fine collections of paintings and sculptures.

There are, further, many well-known national and international personalities in Washington, D. C., at any given time. The social life of the city centers around the affairs which are given by political leaders and foreign diplomats. The embassies hold numerous parties, some of which cost as much as \$5,000. The large majority of Washingtonians, however, lead the same simple and informal existence that most people do in other cities.

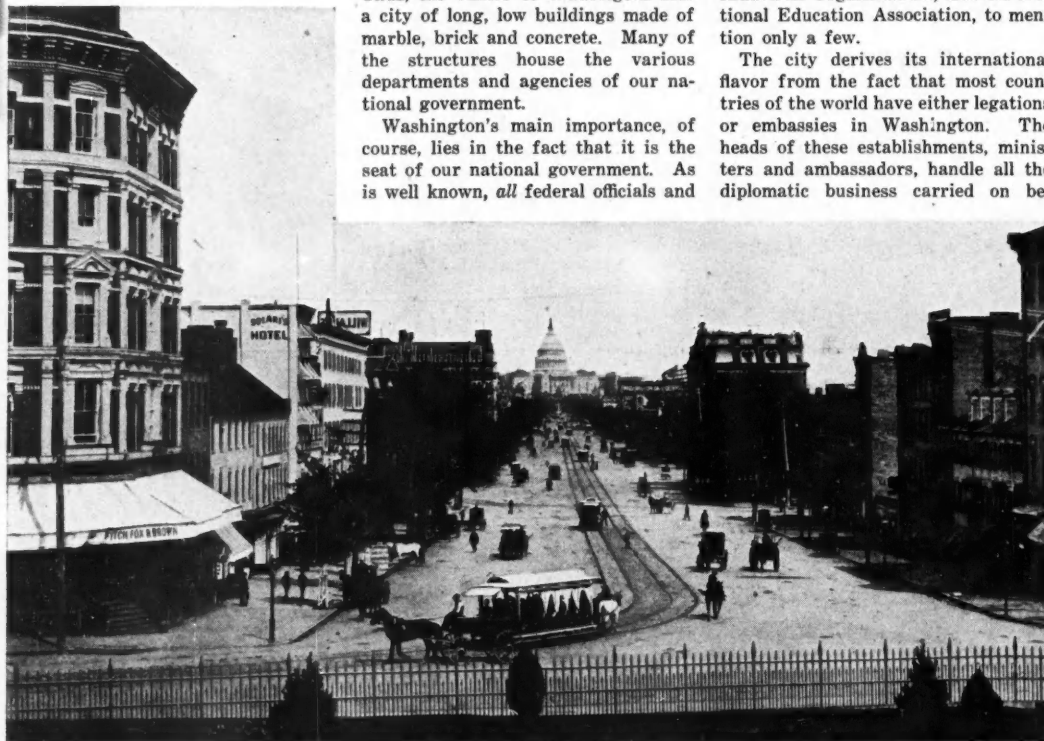
Such, in brief, is the nation's capital today. It is, without question one of the most interesting and important cities in the world.

The History

THE history of Washington is as interesting as the city itself is today.

During and immediately following the Revolutionary War, the country had several temporary capitals. Gradually, a strong feeling grew that the national government should occupy a city of its own. An incident that occurred just after the Revolution supported this belief. Congress, convening in Philadelphia, was temporarily driven out of town by militiamen who had not been paid for war services.

So it was decided that Congress needed a meeting place outside the



BETWEEN 1862 AND 1890, horse-drawn trolleys made this trip along Pennsylvania Avenue, from the Capitol to the Treasury Building, in 20 to 25 minutes. Today electric-powered streetcars can do it in a few minutes. Many years ago, 40 transportation companies served the District. Today, one—the Capital Transit Company—operates a unified system.

jurisdiction of any state—a nationally controlled area where the government could properly defend its headquarters. The Constitution, drawn up in 1787, provided for such a district but did not say where it should be situated.

As students of history know, there was a prolonged and bitter dispute over where the capital should be located. After much quarreling and compromising, a site on the Potomac, near President Washington's Mount Vernon estate, was finally agreed upon. The first boundary stone for the District of Columbia was put in place on April 15, 1791, but it was not until 9 years later that the government was to move there.

Meanwhile, steps had to be taken to get the new capital ready for the federal officials. To make a street plan, President Washington employed Major Pierre Charles L'Enfant, a French artist and engineer who had served with the American forces during the Revolution. Washington and L'Enfant together studied the lay of the land in the District.

The French engineer then drew up a plan embodying the features for which our nation's capital is now famous—the spacious parks, the broad avenues which run in so many different directions, the circles where streets come together like the spokes of a wheel. The two key points, around which the city was planned, were the sites of the Capitol Building and the President's House. It was fortunate, indeed, that L'Enfant had the vision to plan such wide streets, for otherwise Washington would have had to be practically rebuilt for modern traffic.

The President's House, now known as the White House, was the first public building to be started in the District. Its cornerstone was laid in 1792. President Washington set the cornerstone of the Capitol Building a year later.

It was not until 1800, however, that the young government moved from its Philadelphia headquarters. In that year, the relatively few federal officials and their employees packed their belongings and public documents to go to Washington. Government personnel consisted of senators and representatives, of Supreme Court justices, of President John Adams, his cabinet, several other executive officers, and fewer than 150 clerks.

In those days, Washington was still far from impressive. The entire District of Columbia, which then included about a third more territory than it does now, had fewer than 15,000 inhabitants when the 1800 census was taken. Government officials and workers found the capital city to be a disagreeable place. The now famous Pennsylvania Avenue, running from the President's House to the Capitol, was referred to as a "great bog."

"There is one good tavern about 40 rods from the Capitol," wrote the Secretary of the Treasury, "and several houses are building or erecting; but I don't see how members of Congress can possibly secure lodgings, unless they will consent to live . . . 10 or 20 crowded in one house. . . . There are few houses in any one place, and most of them small, miserable huts."

A European diplomat, sent here to represent his government, took one look and said: "What have I done to be condemned to such a place?"

Off to a slow start, Washington's development received a severe setback during this nation's second war with England. British troops who seized the city in the summer of 1814 set fire to the President's House, the Capitol, and several other buildings. This act caused great indignation in England as well as in America. To hide the marks of the fire, the President's House was painted white, so it came to be known as the White House.

By 1860, the District of Columbia had about 75,000 people. The Civil War, which broke out in the following year, turned Washington into an armed camp, since the city was situated just across the river from Confederate territory.

The present Capitol dome was completed during that conflict, but there were still many improvements to be made in the building. The White House was also lacking in furnishings. Just before the Civil War, for example, when the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII, visited President Buchanan, the President had to sleep on a sofa and let the Prince sleep in his bed.

In the years that have followed, Washington has kept pace with the rapid progress which our nation as a whole has made. Just as the United States has grown from a small, struggling republic to the world's most



THE U. S. CONSTITUTION makes no provision for citizens of the District of Columbia to take part in Presidential elections, and it does not provide for their representation in Congress. For many years the District elected its officials, but this right was lost in 1875. Washingtonians are trying to get "home rule" again.

prosperous nation, our once-ridiculed "wilderness capital" has become a thriving, beautiful city.

Home Rule?

AMERICANS as well as foreigners are often surprised to find that citizens of Washington are not allowed to govern themselves. Residents of the city cannot take part in national elections nor can they vote for candidates for local office.

Instead, the city is governed by three commissioners appointed by the President of the United States. The city's laws are made by the U. S. Congress.

Opinion is divided over whether Washingtonians should be granted suffrage. Those who want Congress to continue to rule Washington argue as follows:

"The city of Washington owes its very existence to the fact that it is the site of the federal government. It holds a unique position among cities, and belongs to the whole nation.

"Under such circumstances, the city must continue to be under the rule of the federal government rather than to be governed by people who might have a purely 'local' point-of-view. It would never do, for example, for local officials alone to plan the future expansion of the city. Their plans might not fit in at all with the building program of the federal government. New structures might mar the appearance of the city.

"A second reason why we had better stick to the present system is concerned with the make-up of the population of Washington. A great many of the residents of the nation's capital are federal employees who have come to Washington from other parts of the country. Many do not consider themselves permanent residents of the capital. They eventually intend to move back to their home states and hence many of them are not interested in the government of Washington."

Those who favor "home rule" for Washington residents put forth the following arguments:

"Citizens of Washington pay taxes,

are subject to the wartime draft, and have all of the other responsibilities of U. S. citizens. Yet they can't vote. This is surely as flagrant an example of 'taxation without representation' as helped bring on the American Revolution.

"Congress should not be expected to act as a 'city council' for the capital of the nation. It is ridiculous for congressmen, busy with such momentous problems as the hydrogen bomb and the European Recovery Program, to waste time in dealing with the local problems of one city.

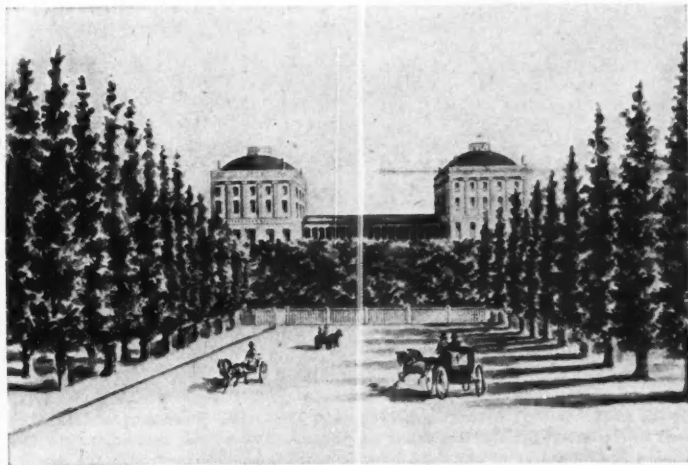
"If Washington were allowed to govern itself, both the city and the nation would benefit. Congressmen would not have to devote their valuable time to the city's local affairs, and an elected city council would run Washington more efficiently than it is now administered. While some congressmen are very conscientious about their responsibilities in governing Washington, others don't concern themselves very much with the problem. They know that whatever they do about running the nation's capital, it isn't going to make any difference to the people back home who elected them.

"In the event that home rule were given to Washington, an arrangement could easily be made for local and federal officials to cooperate in planning the future development of the city.

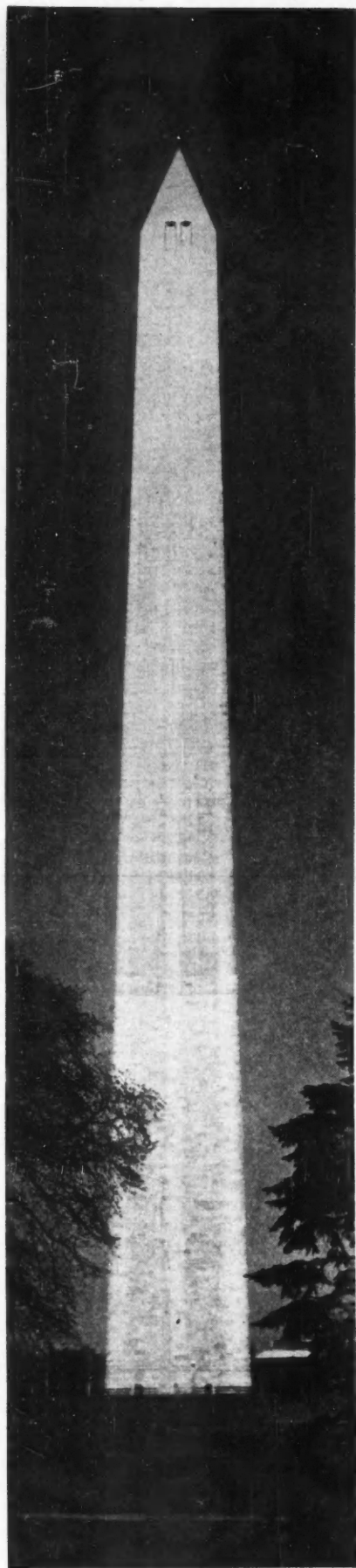
"If there is any place where the democratic form of government should exist, it should be in the capital city of the world's leading democracy."

The majority of Washingtonians, in occasional unofficial balloting, have expressed themselves in favor of home rule. A number of bills to this effect have been introduced in Congress, but nothing has come of them. A measure now before Congress, introduced by Senator Kefauver of Tennessee, would give the capital's residents self-government but would enable Congress to "veto" local laws it opposed.

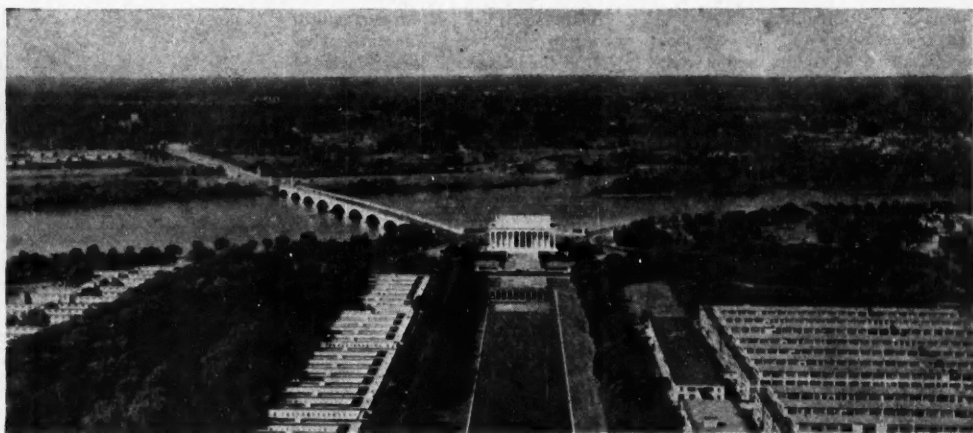
The Kefauver Bill does not provide for any District of Columbia representation in Congress nor would it make Washington citizens eligible to vote for President. To achieve these objectives, an amendment to the Constitution would have to be adopted.



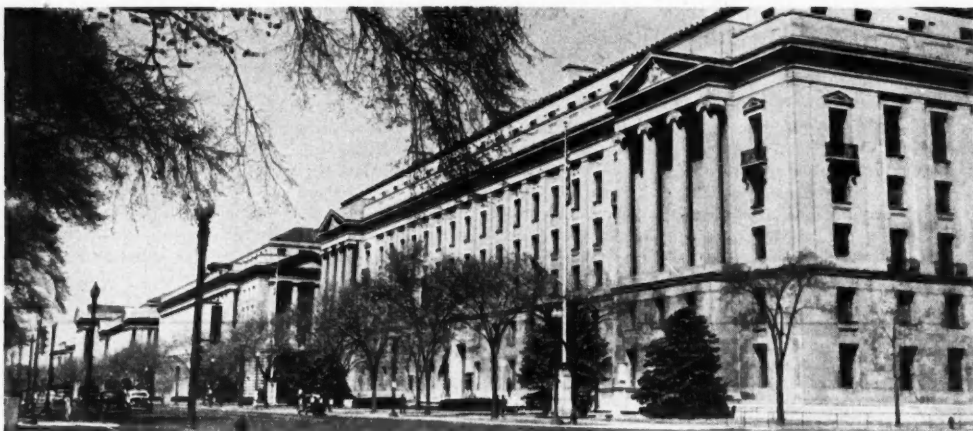
THE CAPITOL as it looked in 1814 before it was burned by the British. The two wings were of stone, and the central arcade was originally of wood. The site for the Capitol, or Congress House, a hill rising 88 feet above the Potomac River, was chosen by L'Enfant. He called it a "pedestal waiting for a monument."



WASHINGTON MONUMENT, rising 555 feet into the air, is said to be the tallest piece of masonry in the world. Built in honor of our first President, the great shaft is faced with gleaming white marble. Set into the inner wall are memorial stones presented by various groups. More than 800,000 visitors ascend the monument yearly to enjoy the splendid view of the city. Most of them ride the elevator, but a few climb the 898 steps winding to the top. Walls at the base are 15 feet thick; at the top they are 18 inches thick.



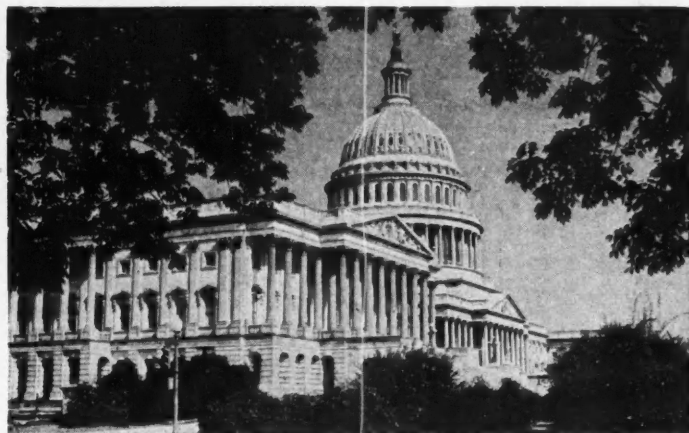
LINCOLN MEMORIAL, built along classic lines, stands on a mound on the bank of the Potomac River. It houses an imposing statue of Abraham Lincoln who is shown sitting in an attitude of deep thought. At night the statue is illumined by floodlights. On the inner walls are carved the Gettysburg and Second Inaugural addresses. The outside of the memorial symbolizes the Union of the States. The names of all the 48 states can easily be seen by passersby. When the Lincoln Memorial was started in 1914, the site came under attack from many critics who contended that the area along the river was no more than a desolate swamp. Today it has been transformed into one of the show places of Washington. In front of the memorial is a rectangular reflecting pool. In back is the Arlington Memorial Bridge, which spans the Potomac. Across the bridge a stately avenue leads to Arlington National Cemetery. In the summer, outdoor concerts are frequently held on the riverbank near the Lincoln Memorial. They are listened to by large audiences on the shore, as well as by numerous people in canoes and small boats. The structures in the foreground are "temporary" buildings erected for use during the two World Wars.



THE FEDERAL TRIANGLE, located about halfway between the Capitol and the White House, is the very heart of "official Washington." It gets its name from the shape of the area as seen from the air or from a map. Here are more government buildings than in any other single section of the city. Facing Constitution Avenue on one side and Pennsylvania Avenue on another, the buildings of the Federal Triangle all conform to the classical type of architecture with sculptured walls and soaring columns. One of the most impressive structures is the Archives Building. Here are collected and filed countless official documents of the U. S. government. Among the executive agencies which have large office buildings in this section of the city are the Post Office Department and the Departments of Justice, Labor, and Commerce. The concentration of government buildings in this district was begun in the 1920's during the administration of President Coolidge. At that time the government bought about 70 acres of land, and had many old buildings in the area torn down. It then launched a major construction program which transformed this section. The National Gallery of Art and the Washington Monument are near the triangle.

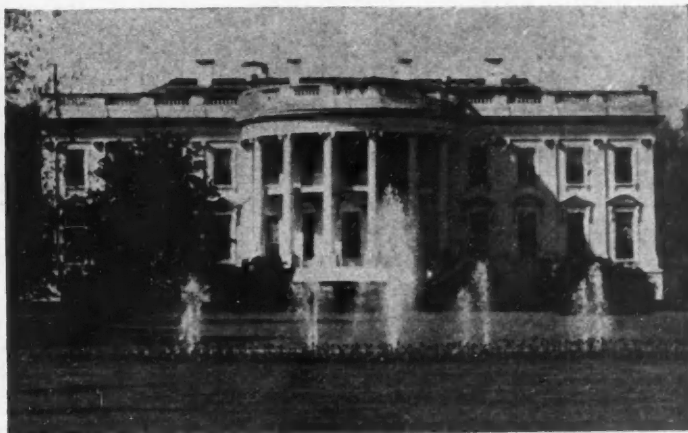


NEWEST OF THE MAJOR SHRINES to the nation's heroes is the Jefferson Memorial. Dedicated in 1943, the building is modeled on the design used by Jefferson for the University of Virginia and for his own home, Monticello. Beneath the dome is an impressive 19-foot statue of our third President, while on the inner walls are quotations from Jefferson's writings. The pool that lies in front of the memorial is the Tidal Basin. It is an engineering device that helps to keep the Washington harbor clear of debris brought in by the rise and fall of the tides. Along the shores of the Tidal Basin are many of the famous Japanese cherry trees which attract thousands of visitors to Washington each spring. Most of these trees were the gift of the people of Tokyo to the City of Washington during the administration of President Taft. Behind the Jefferson Memorial is the Potomac River. It formed a highway to the West for early explorers and traders. Fairly large vessels can today come up the river from Chesapeake Bay to Washington, although there is hardly any such traffic into the city. Washington is 125 miles from the river's mouth. On the far side of the river (directly above the memorial) is Washington National Airport.



A. DEYANET, INC.

THE CAPITOL was originally called Congress House. Building operations on the central section of the structure were begun in the year 1793. Work was far enough along so Congress could hold its first session in the building, and its first in Washington, in 1800. The Capitol was burned by the British in 1814. When it was rebuilt, a small wooden dome was added. Congress authorized building of a metal dome and the two wings in 1850. By 1864 the Capitol was completed along the lines it retains today. Steam heating, elevators, electric lighting, and air conditioning were added over the years. The Senate occupies the right wing (as one faces the building). The House occupies the left wing. Both were repaired extensively and redecorated in 1949. Inside, paintings on the dome's ceiling are a chief attraction. The dome rises to a point 180 feet above the floor.



OSCAR SEIDENBERG

THE WHITE HOUSE is the official residence of our Chief Executive. Designer James Hoban drew plans for the structure, which is built of sandstone. The cornerstone was laid in 1792, and our second President, John Adams, became the first resident in 1800. The name White House was used early in the 1800's, but became the official title only after Theodore Roosevelt assumed the Presidency in 1901. Like the Capitol, the White House was burned by the British in 1814. It was reconstructed from the original plans. The interior was redone in 1902. An executive office annex was added in the early 1900's and has since been enlarged. President Truman added a second-floor balcony on the south portico. At present, the interior of the residence is being rebuilt. Before the latest reconstruction work began, the White House was found to be in an extremely unsafe condition.



OSCAR SEIDENBERG

THE SUPREME COURT of white marble, completed in 1935, is thought by many to be the best example of classic architecture in the capital. The two statues, at the right and left of the entrance, symbolize the problems of justice and the power of the law. The triangular design, above the entrance, portrays the study and administration of the law. Within the building are: the Courtroom, where cases are argued before the Justices; offices and a conference room for the Court; a suite for the Attorney General and government lawyers; a room for other lawyers; a legal library; rooms for newspaper reporters; and a cafeteria. The Supreme Court met in the Capitol until the new building was completed. There it occupied a very small room which had been used as the Senate chamber when our country was young. The building above faces the Capitol Grounds.



OSCAR SEIDENBERG

CONGRESSMEN'S OFFICES. Three marble buildings provide offices for our senators and representatives, and all face the Capitol Grounds. The newer of the two House Office Buildings is shown above. It has a large gymnasium and is modern in every respect, but the representatives with offices here must walk across the street or through the older building to attend Congress. The older building has an underground walkway to the Capitol. The Senate building, more elaborate than either of the House structures, has a small, underground electric railway connecting it with the Capitol. The senators and representatives receive their constituents and government officials, write speeches, and do other "paper work" in their offices. Their secretaries and clerks are there to see visitors and handle mail. Senators have an average of eight people on their staff; representatives about four.



HARRIS & EWING

BLAIR-LEE HOUSE (left) and Blair House (right) are being used by President Truman while the White House is being repaired. Blair House was built in the 1820's and takes its name from the family which owned it for many years. Francis Blair, a newspaper editor, was the first member of that family to occupy it. Many historical events are connected with the house. General Robert E. Lee, for example, was offered command of the Union Army in a conference at Blair House. Blair-Lee House was constructed just before the Civil War. It has also been the home of well-known Washington families. The federal government now owns both houses, having purchased them for entertaining distinguished foreign visitors. Among the guests staying here have been the King of Greece and Foreign Minister Molotov of Russia. President Truman moved to the Blair houses in 1948.



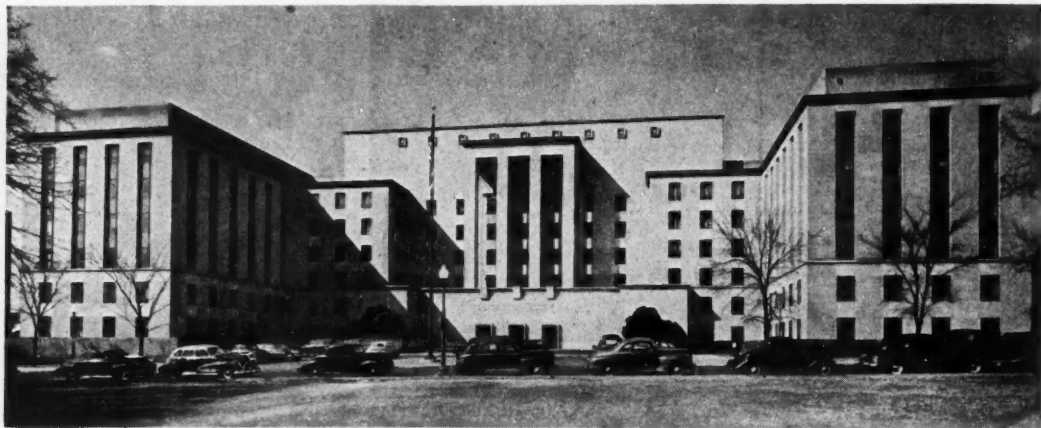
HARRIS & EWING

PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE is one of the most famous streets in the world. It connects the Capitol with the White House and extends well beyond each of them. If original plans had been followed, it would run in a straight line between these two buildings. However, President Andrew Jackson located the present Treasury Building in such a way that the avenue must detour around it. A part of this street is lined with government buildings, and other portions pass through business sections. Many parades, including those held in connection with Presidential inaugurations, take place on Pennsylvania Avenue. A ride along this street, between sidewalks crowded with cheering Washingtonians, is generally part of the official welcome given to foreign heads of state who visit our country. Most of the city's earliest inns and hotels were located on Pennsylvania Avenue.



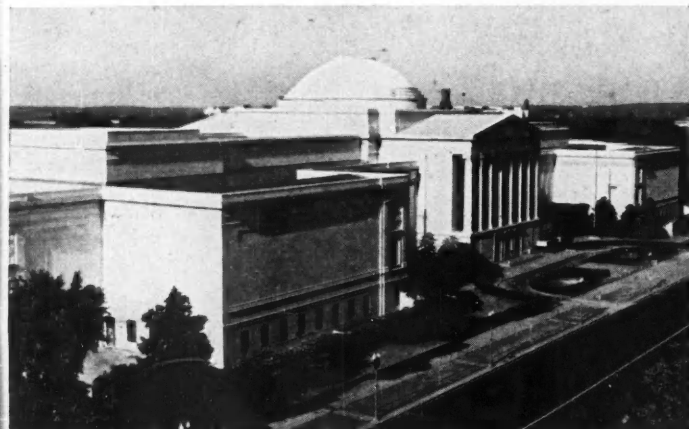
OSCAR SEIDENBERG

ATOP THE DOME of the Capitol stands the Statue of Freedom. It is 19½ feet high and weighs 15,000 pounds. Designed by an American, the plaster model was made in Rome. Storms almost sank the ship that brought it from Italy. When the statue was put in place on December 2, 1863, a 35-gun salute was fired on Capitol Hill. Guns from 12 nearby forts answered. The statue was cast from the plaster model shown above.



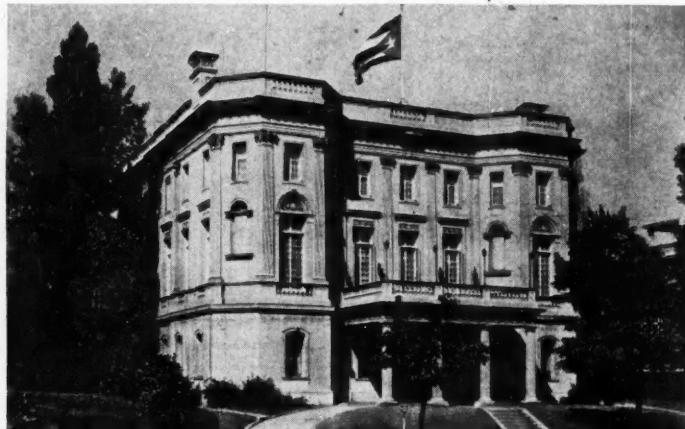
HARRIS & EWING

MAIN OFFICES OF THE U. S. STATE DEPARTMENT are housed in this impressive, modern structure. The building was erected about 10 years ago, at a cost of 23 million dollars. It was occupied by the War Department for several years, and was turned over to the State Department in the spring of 1947. In addition to the headquarters shown here, where nearly 2,000 people work, the State Department uses several smaller structures nearby, and some buildings in other parts of Washington. D. C. residents generally refer to this main building as "New State." The structure which the State Department formerly occupied, and which now shelters numerous White House offices, they call "Old State." Upon entering "New State," the visitor finds himself in a huge lobby, with walls of reddish as well as black marble. A colorful mural painting, placed opposite the front doors, represents what President Franklin D. Roosevelt described as the "four essential human freedoms"—freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. In addition to its many offices the State Department has a number of conference rooms, and it is equipped to communicate quickly and continuously with its embassies and other agencies all over the world. It is constructed so that new wings may be added later as needed.



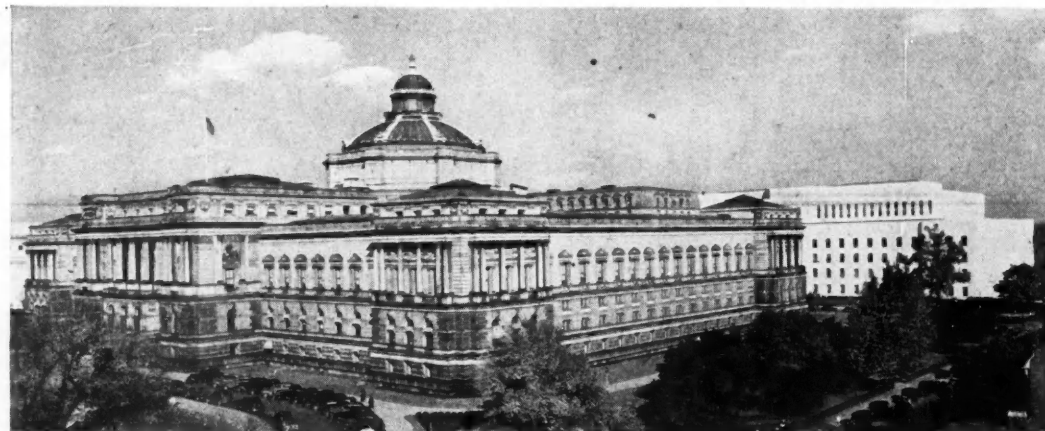
OSCAR SEIDENBERG

THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART was established by Congress in 1937. Congress appropriated land for the gallery and maintains it with federal funds. But the late Andrew Mellon, one-time Secretary of the Treasury, donated the money, about 15 million dollars, for building the gallery. Begun in 1937, it was completed in December 1940, and was opened to the public on March 17, 1941, with a dedicatory address by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. One of the world's largest marble structures, the gallery has more than 500,000 square feet of floor space. It has no windows, and the best artificial lighting equipment available has been installed. There are more than 16,000 works of art on exhibit in the building. These include Mr. Mellon's extensive collection from works of the great masters, paintings and sculptures dating from the thirteenth to the nineteenth centuries.



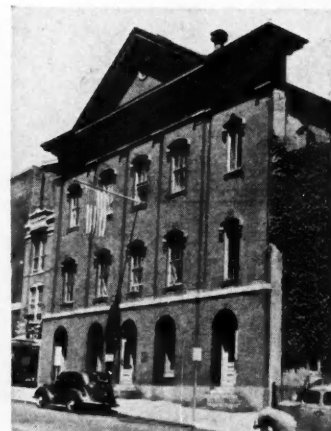
HARRIS & EWING

EMBASSIES AND LEGATIONS are a very important part of the life in Washington. More than 70 nations maintain diplomatic representatives in the capital. Most of them keep up elaborate buildings, like this one on 16th Street which houses the Cuban Embassy. Massachusetts Avenue is frequently called "Embassy Row" because of the large number of diplomatic headquarters along it. Among the embassies located on Massachusetts Avenue are those of Great Britain, Canada, and Norway. Each embassy is owned by the country it represents, and is not considered a part of the United States. Each is, then, really a "foreign island" in the capital. The embassy representatives carry on negotiations for their governments with us, primarily through contacts with our State Department. The diplomats, representing foreign countries, also are prominent in social affairs.



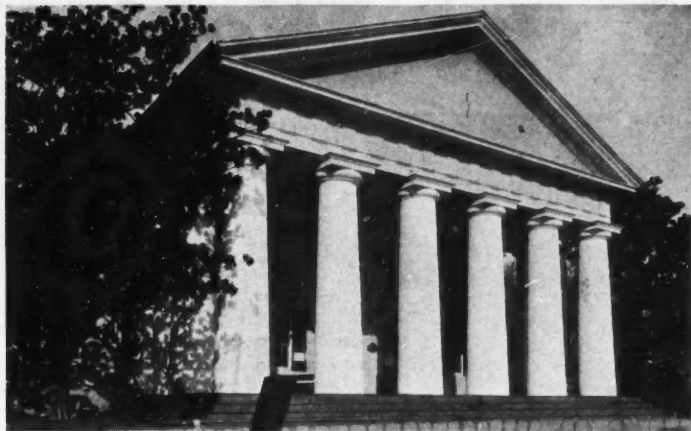
BUCKINGHAM PHOTO

SAID TO BE THE LARGEST LIBRARY in the world, the Library of Congress was started in 1800 with an appropriation of \$5,000. By 1802, it contained 964 volumes and 9 maps. The collection was twice partially destroyed by fire—in 1814 and in 1851. Today the library's budget is more than 7 million dollars a year; it has approximately 30 million items—books, maps, periodicals, and so on. Approximately 20,000 new items come into the library each day. Two copies of every book which is copyrighted in this country must by law be placed there. Planned primarily as a service for Congress, the library is open to the public, but its books cannot generally be taken from the building. A card catalogue lists books that can be found in 713 other libraries in the U. S. and Canada. Hundreds of people, from scholars to casual newspaper readers, use the library each day. Attendants are ready to help individuals sift out material from the library's vast resources. Such important documents as the Declaration of Independence and the U. S. Constitution are permanently on display. Among the library's other outstanding possessions are its extensive collections of Russian and Chinese literature. Special exhibits are being planned, as the library celebrates its own 150th birthday and that of the District of Columbia this year.



REYNOLDS PHOTO

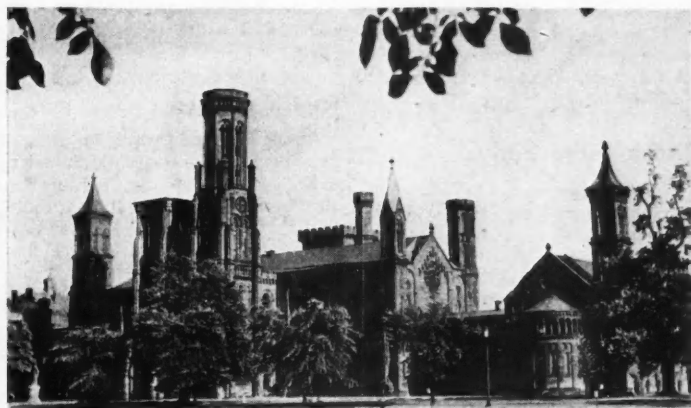
LINCOLN was assassinated in Ford's Theatre, on April 14, 1865, by John Wilkes Booth. Stage, balconies, and seats have been removed, and the building contains an excellent collection of Lincoln relics, together with a model showing how the theatre looked on the night of the assassination. Across the street is Petersen House where Lincoln died on the morning after he was shot. Both buildings are open to the public.



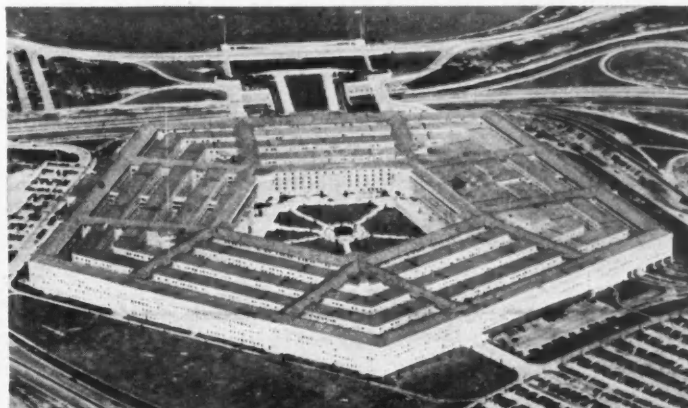
LEE MANSION, in Arlington National Cemetery, was the home of the great southern general, Robert E. Lee. In 1861, Lee signed his resignation from the Union Army in this house, and wrote to a friend that he would take up his sword again only in defense. Shortly after, Lee offered his services to the Confederacy. The Union forces used the house as a hospital during the Civil War, and it was then that the grounds were taken over by the government for a national cemetery. Six columns, patterned after the Temple of Theseus of Athens, are the outstanding feature of the luxurious mansion. It is placed high on a hill above the Potomac and looks down over graves of our servicemen toward the Pentagon and Washington. The house is now a museum and visitors may wander through its halls to gaze upon lovely furnishings of the type used on such estates 100 years ago.



GEORGE WASHINGTON'S estate, Mount Vernon, is probably the most popular of all the show places connected with the nation's capital. Restored by an independent group, the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, it follows exactly the plans Washington made. Even the original wallpaper has been duplicated from fragments found on the old walls. The estate is part of 5,000 acres obtained by Washington's family about three centuries ago. When not serving as general or President, Washington actively managed the estate, supervising the work of more than 200 servants. Wool, cotton, and even silk were grown, spun, and woven at Mount Vernon. Despite his achievements as a statesman and military man, Washington wanted to be remembered most of all as an outstanding farmer. The ivy-covered tomb of George and Martha Washington is located on the grounds.



THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION was given to our country by an Englishman, James Smithson, who willed the United States his fortune to establish an institution "for the increase and diffusion of knowledge." The institution, now over 100 years old, conducts research and maintains a large number of exhibits. Most of the exhibits are in a group of buildings near the Mall—the stretch of ground between the Washington Monument and the Capitol. On display are famous airplanes, the flag which inspired Francis Scott Key to write "The Star-Spangled Banner," dresses of our Presidents' wives, models of great inventions, the skeletons of giant dinosaurs, and hundreds of other items. The picture above shows one of the institution's main buildings on the Mall. In another section of Washington, the Smithsonian has a large zoo that attracts thousands of visitors the year round.



THE PENTAGON, completed in January 1943, at a cost of 83 million dollars, houses our Department of Defense. It is the world's largest office building, with 5 floors, a mezzanine, basement, and sub-basement. The entire Capitol building would fit into one of its 5 wedge-shaped sections. The Pentagon is one mile in perimeter and has 17½ miles of corridors. Yet the arrangement is such that the maximum distance between any two rooms is 1,800 feet—an average 6-minute walk. On March 1 the Pentagon staff numbered 24,603, three fourths of them civilians. Besides offices and storerooms, the Pentagon contains 4 cafeterias, 9 snack bars, 3 dining rooms, a central kitchen, a banking office, post office, barber-shop, shoe shop, jewelry shop, drugstore, men's clothing store, department store, bookstore, and rail and airline ticket offices. It is made of steel and concrete.



TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER in Arlington National Cemetery. An unidentified American, killed during World War I, is buried here. General Pershing brought the soldier from France in 1921, to be enshrined as a symbol and memorial to all the many servicemen who sacrificed their lives in the fight for liberty. An inscription on the tomb reads: "Here rests in honored glory an American Soldier known but to God." The Arlington Cemetery, in Virginia across the Potomac from Washington, formerly was the estate of General Robert E. Lee. Its 408 acres furnish burial grounds for officers and enlisted personnel of the armed forces. There are many monuments on the grounds, the largest being the Memorial Amphitheater of white marble. Begun in 1915, it was completed in 1920. The Amphitheater is used for funeral services and for memorial tributes to our heroes.



IN CONTRAST with Washington's modern homes and magnificent public buildings are slum dwellings like these. Not conspicuous to visitors, the capital's slums are largely hidden away on remote side-streets and alleys. Nevertheless, they constitute one of the city's biggest problems and some lie in the shadow of the Capitol. According to the National Capital Housing Authority, the city has at least 40,000 dwellings that should not be used. Many have no running water and are lighted by candles or kerosene lamps. The death rate from tuberculosis is twice as high in the slums as in other parts of the city. The crime rate is also high in these miserable areas. A federal law which went into effect last year is expected to remedy the housing situation to some degree, but it will probably be a long time before the slums that mar the District are entirely eliminated.

The Story of the Week

Peace Talk

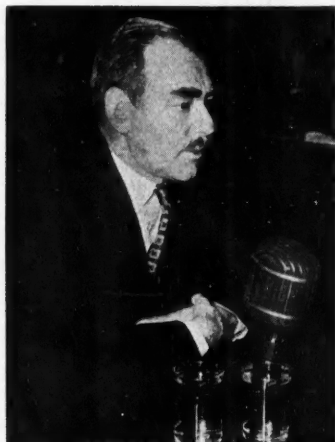
For several weeks there has been a great deal of "peace talk" in both Europe and America. There has been discussion of the possibility that the United States and Russia might come to some kind of agreement and call off the "cold war."

The Russian leaders are talking about peace. Several of them have said recently that Communist and capitalist countries might live together without war. They have made other remarks indicating that they were anxious to avoid a conflict.

Opinion in America and western Europe is divided concerning the meaning of the Russian peace offensive. Some think that the Russians do not want a "shooting war" and that they are ready to negotiate with the United States. Others think that if a conference were held the Russians would not try any harder than they have in other conferences to find peaceful solutions. It is argued that they are talking peace merely to deceive their own people and people elsewhere, and that they have no thought of giving up their aggressive international policies.

Secretary of State Dean Acheson says that the United States is always ready to discuss with the Soviets the terms upon which their country and ours may live together in peace and friendship. But he adds that we do not intend to be deceived by trickery. He lists seven steps which the Russians may take if they wish a real peace. Here are the steps open to them:

1. They could agree on peace treaties with Germany, Austria, and Japan—treaties that would not place these countries under control of the Soviet Union.
2. Soviet armies and police forces could be withdrawn from the small nations in eastern Europe now under Russian control, thus giving these nations real independence.
3. Russia could stop her obstructive tactics in the United Nations and genuinely cooperate with other members of that organization.
4. Soviet leaders could join with the United States in working out truly effective control of atomic weapons and all other armaments.
5. Russia could stop working with native Communists in other countries



DEAN ACHESON, Secretary of State, has been speaking in various parts of the country on our foreign policy.



THE EXILED KING LEOPOLD of Belgium, with his eldest son, Prince Bauddouin, and his wife, Princess de Rethy. Leopold, now living in Switzerland, won a 57 per cent majority in a plebiscite on whether he should return to the throne. The vote was only advisory, however, leaving parliament to make the final decision. A government crisis has arisen over this issue as we go to press.

in the effort to overthrow non-Communist governments.

6. The Russians could treat the diplomatic representatives of other countries "with decency and respect," so that normal diplomatic relations could be carried on.

7. The completely untrue and distorted propaganda which Russia is constantly spreading against countries which she opposes could be discontinued.

Secretary of State Acheson says that these are the terms under which peace and real friendship might be achieved. He warns the American people, however, not to expect too much until the Russians show by actions, as well as words, that they really want peace.

Until this happens, Mr. Acheson says we must oppose Russian aggression and communist expansion. America must be prepared to meet every crisis which develops, and our political and economic power must, on each occasion, be used in the most effective way to safeguard freedom for ourselves and others. This is the policy which the Secretary of State calls "total diplomacy."

Mr. Acheson calls upon the American people to support this program, but he has not told in any detail what the average citizen can do. Perhaps this will come later.

Student Poll

The students of the American Government classes at Arcadia High School, Arcadia, Wisconsin, recently conducted a public opinion poll in their community. The questions asked were selected by a special student committee headed by Marjorie Fernholz. About 600 people in all were interviewed. The results of the survey, which were sent to THE AMERICAN OBSERVER by Miss Fernholz and Mr. Herbert Wenger, teacher in American Government at Arcadia High School, follow:

1. "Do you think there will be a third world war?" Yes—349; No—131; No idea—99.
2. "Do you think there will be a depression within the next two years?" Yes—185; No—303; No idea—93.
3. "Do you think the United States should keep a large peacetime Army and Navy?" Yes—487; No—62; No idea—29.

4. "Do you think the atomic bomb could be successfully outlawed in the world?" Yes—213; No—290; No idea—78.

5. "Do you think our government should outlaw communism in the United States?" Yes—481; No—60; No idea—37.

British Labor Party

As we go to press, the British Labor government is still in power. On three different occasions in recent weeks, the Conservative members of the House of Commons attempted to defeat the government by asking for a vote on a controversial issue. Each time, however, the Laborites managed to obtain a majority and thus remain in office.

Some observers believe that the Labor cabinet will not be forced to resign at least until summer. Others feel that it will do so at a somewhat earlier date. The latter commentators say that Great Britain is about to face an economic crisis brought on by the continuing lack of dollars with which to buy essential products from the United States. Such a crisis, it is said, could easily lose enough support in Parliament for the Labor Party to force it out of control.

It is uncertain whether the Labor government will go ahead with its plans to nationalize the iron and steel industry if it remains in power beyond October, the date on which a board is supposed to be set up to manage the industry on behalf of the nation. In a recent debate in Parliament, the Conservatives tried to get the Laborites to indicate whether they intended to proceed with their nationalization program. The latter refused to be drawn out on the issue.

More Streamlining

A number of federal agencies may soon find themselves in the midst of reorganization, if the proposals now before Congress are approved. The proposals, submitted recently by President Truman, would bring about changes and mergers in over 18 government agencies, departments, boards, and commissions.

The President's proposals are based on recommendations made last year by the Hoover Commission—a group, headed by ex-President Herbert Hoover, that studied government ac-

tivities and suggested changes to bring about greater efficiency and economy. Either house of Congress may veto the proposals, but if neither has expressed disapproval within 60 days, the President may go ahead with his plans.

A few of the changes which President Truman has asked Congress to support are the following: (1) Give cabinet members increased authority over the departments they head; (2) put several independent federal labor activities under the control of the Department of Labor; (3) take away from the State Department some of its present duties which do not concern foreign relations (the publication of U.S. laws, for instance).

As we go to press, it is not known just how Congress feels about these proposals. Last year, the nation's lawmakers approved 6 reorganization plans presented by President Truman. If the current proposals are adopted, it will mean that almost half the changes recommended by the Hoover Commission will have been put into effect.

French Morocco

Among the lands which have been welcoming residents from Europe is Africa's French Morocco. With an area a little smaller than our state of California and a population of over 8½ million, it has taken in 100,000 new residents since the war.

When the Europeans arrived in French Morocco, they found a land of white-robed Arabs. Life moved slowly at a pace set many hundreds of years ago. But the Europeans soon brought about changes in the sections of the



MADAME PANDIT, Ambassador from India, and her daughter are shown listening to the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee hearing on charges that some employees of our State Department are Communists. The committee is expected to report its findings before long.

country in which they settled. There are now good roads, modern homes, and even a Greyhound busline.

Although Morocco lies in the low latitudes, even the Scandinavians among the newcomers have not found it uncomfortably hot. The Atlas Mountains, which stretch diagonally across the country, act as a barrier to keep out the hot winds blowing off the Sahara.

The native ruler of the land, called the Sultan, was once an absolute monarch with complete control over the lives and properties of his subjects. His powers today are sharply curtailed by the French Resident-General, who can veto any act of the Sultan. French Morocco is a protectorate of France.

—By DAVID BEILES.